

**INCIDENT OPERATIONS**  
(Revised September 2001)

**8340**

**GENERAL POLICY ON USING AIRCRAFT**  
(Revised September 2001)

**8340.1**

**INITIAL ATTACK**  
(Revised September 2001)

**8340.1.1**

It has been demonstrated that airtankers and helitack crews are most effective when used for fast initial attack in conjunction with and in support of ground attack operations. In recognition of this fact, air attack and helitack bases have been located to provide rapid response to fires in California.

Aircraft provide limited duration support for fire managers. The number of aircraft initially responding to an incident is predetermined by the dispatch response criteria for each specific response area and the current level of fire danger. The incident commander, with the help of the air attack supervisor or air operations director, will evaluate the need to continue, increase, decrease or stop the use of aircraft at an incident. Any time that it is found that aircraft are ineffective or not needed, they will be released immediately.

Due to their limited number, speed and mobility, the dispatch and control of aircraft presents a complex dispatching problem. Occasionally, severe competition exists between units, between regions, or between agencies for the limited number of aircraft. The most efficient use of this limited resource thus requires a high degree of coordination between unit administrators and agencies, and the acceptance and understanding of certain basic policies.

**EXTENDED ATTACK AND MAJOR FIRES**  
(Revised September 2001)

**8340.1.2**

When a fire goes beyond the initial attack stage, the incident commander needs to continually reevaluate the need and use of all aircraft. While it is important that all aircraft be made available for initial attack as much as possible, specific consideration needs to be given to the different capabilities of the air resources as it applies to incident needs, current and potential.

## **MANAGEMENT OF AIR RESOURCES**

**8340.1.3**

**(Revised September 2001)**

The ATGS is responsible for the efficient use of aircraft and retardant. In the placing of aircraft requests for subsequent operational periods careful consideration needs to be given to flight crew duty day limitations and rest period requirements. In addition an evaluation of the actual or potential ability of the aircraft to fly or be effective due to environmental or topographic conditions present or forecast. Discussion by the Command and General Staff with AOBD and ATGS personnel is critical prior to placing any requests for air resources in order to maximize the effectiveness and safety of the air assets.

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